

## Term Information

Effective Term Spring 2019  
*Previous Value* Spring 2016

## Course Change Information

### What change is being proposed? (If more than one, what changes are being proposed?)

This course is being changed from a 4 credit to a 3 credit course. The Department is also broadening the options for length of course to open the course to flexible scheduling, particularly during the summer 4, 6, and 8 week sessions.

### What is the rationale for the proposed change(s)?

The previous chair of NELC conceived this course as a high enrolling course that included a required discussion section that would be taught by a GA. We do not have adequate enrollments to justify this plan nor adequate GAs to cover the discussion section teaching duties. We would like to teach this course as a 3 credit lecture course, which is typical of non-language courses in our Department.

### What are the programmatic implications of the proposed change(s)?

(e.g. program requirements to be added or removed, changes to be made in available resources, effect on other programs that use the course)?

N/A

Is approval of the request contingent upon the approval of other course or curricular program request? No

Is this a request to withdraw the course? No

## General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area Near Eastn Lang and Cultures  
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org Near Eastern Languages/Culture - D0554  
College/Academic Group Arts and Sciences  
Level/Career Undergraduate  
Course Number/Catalog 3111  
Course Title Ancient Empires  
Transcript Abbreviation Ancient Empires  
Course Description This is an introduction to the history and cultures of the ancient empires of southwestern Asia, focusing on the period from the Akkadian empire to the establishment of Islam (ca 2340 BCE–ca 750 CE).  
*Previous Value* *Introduction to the history and cultures of the ancient empires of southwestern Asia, focusing on the period from the Assyrian and Persian Empires to the establishment of Islam (ca 900 BCE–ca 750 CE).*  
Semester Credit Hours/Units Fixed: 3  
*Previous Value* *Fixed: 4*

## Offering Information

Length Of Course 14 Week, 12 Week, 8 Week, 7 Week, 6 Week, 4 Week  
*Previous Value* *14 Week, 12 Week*  
Flexibly Scheduled Course Never  
Does any section of this course have a distance education component? No  
Grading Basis Letter Grade  
Repeatable No  
Course Components Lecture  
*Previous Value* *Recitation, Lecture*  
Grade Roster Component Lecture

---

<b>Credit Available by Exam</b>	No
<b>Admission Condition Course</b>	No
<b>Off Campus</b>	Never
<b>Campus of Offering</b>	Columbus

## Prerequisites and Exclusions

<b>Prerequisites/Corequisites</b>	Prereq: English 1110.
<b>Exclusions</b>	
<b>Electronically Enforced</b>	No

## Cross-Listings

Cross-Listings

## Subject/CIP Code

<b>Subject/CIP Code</b>	05.0108
<b>Subsidy Level</b>	Baccalaureate Course
<b>Intended Rank</b>	Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior

## Requirement/Elective Designation

General Education course:  
Historical Study  
The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units

## Course Details

<b>Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students will learn how to use ancient primary sources critically to create a historical narrative and to understand the modern appropriation of ancient history for political and other purposes.</li></ul>
<b>Content Topic List</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the formation of early states</li><li>• the kingdoms of Mesopotamia, Anshan and the Elamites</li><li>• the Achaemenid dynasty</li><li>• Alexander and his successors</li><li>• the Parthian and Sasanian Persian empires and their rivalries with Rome</li><li>• the empires of Afghanistan and the kingdom of Armenia.</li></ul>
<b>Sought Concurrence</b>	Yes

**COURSE CHANGE REQUEST**  
3111 - Status: PENDING

Last Updated: Heysel,Garett Robert  
09/28/2018

**Attachments**

- Ancient Empires\_Syllabus.pdf: Updated Syllabus  
*(Syllabus. Owner: Smith,Jeremie S)*
- NELC 3111 GE Rationale.docx: GE Rationale  
*(GEC Model Curriculum Compliance Stmt. Owner: Smith,Jeremie S)*
- NELC 3111 Assessing GE Outcomes.doc: GE Assessment Plan  
*(GEC Course Assessment Plan. Owner: Smith,Jeremie S)*
- Old NELC 3111 syllabus.pdf: Old Syllabus  
*(Syllabus. Owner: Smith,Jeremie S)*
- NELC Concurrence letter.docx: Classics concurrence letter  
*(Concurrence. Owner: Smith,Jeremie S)*
- Dept. of History concurrence email.pdf: History concurrence letter  
*(Concurrence. Owner: Smith,Jeremie S)*
- Ancient Empires\_Syllabus (updated 9-28).docx: Updated Syllabus  
*(Syllabus. Owner: Smith,Jeremie S)*
- NELC 3111 Assessing GE Outcomes - updated 9-28.doc: Updated Assessment Plan  
*(GEC Course Assessment Plan. Owner: Smith,Jeremie S)*

**Comments**

- The GE Rationale and Assessment Plan for this course will not be changed since the course's content and means of assessing student progress on GE Goals and Learning Objectives remains unchanged.

9/28 - All contingencies and recommendations have been addressed in the updated syllabus and assessment plan.

*(by Smith,Jeremie S on 09/28/2018 02:52 PM)*

- See 9-27-18 feedback email. *(by Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal on 09/27/2018 10:10 AM)*

**Workflow Information**

Status	User(s)	Date/Time	Step
Submitted	Smith,Jeremie S	08/08/2018 04:07 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Holub,Robert Charles	08/08/2018 04:08 PM	Unit Approval
Approved	Heysel,Garett Robert	08/10/2018 06:58 PM	College Approval
Revision Requested	Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal	09/27/2018 10:10 AM	ASCCAO Approval
Submitted	Smith,Jeremie S	09/28/2018 02:56 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Holub,Robert Charles	09/28/2018 04:48 PM	Unit Approval
Approved	Heysel,Garett Robert	09/28/2018 07:13 PM	College Approval
Pending Approval	Nolen,Dawn Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal Oldroyd,Shelby Quinn Hanlin,Deborah Kay Jenkins,Mary Ellen Bigler	09/28/2018 07:13 PM	ASCCAO Approval

# **Ancient Empires**

## **NELC 3111 SPRING 2019 (3 credit hours)**

The History and Cultures of the Empires of Iran, Iraq, Syria, Anatolia, Armenia, and Afghanistan from Sargon to Muhammad

### **Course Description**

This is an introduction to the history and cultures of the ancient empires of southwestern Asia, focusing on the period from the Akkadian empire to the establishment of Islam (ca 2340 BCE–ca 750 CE). Students will learn how to use ancient primary sources critically to create a historical narrative and to understand the modern appropriation of ancient history for political and other purposes.

Major topics include the formation of early states, the kingdoms of Mesopotamia, Anatolia, Anshan and the Elamites, the Achaemenid dynasty, Alexander and his successors, the Parthian and Sasanian Persian empires and their rivalries with Rome, as well as the empires of Afghanistan and the kingdom of Armenia. The course will include an introduction to the geography of southwestern Asia and a survey of languages, Mesopotamian and other religions, and some ancient literature from a variety of cultures. Extensive readings of primary sources will include classical Greek and Latin authors, as well as works composed in Iran, from royal inscriptions to neighboring Armenian and Aramaic sources chronicling war and strife. Two major themes will be the nature of empires and the use and interpretation of primary written materials to reconstruct past cultures.

### **GE Credit and Learning Goals**

This course fulfills the **GE Historical Study** category.

#### **GE Historical Study Goals:**

Students recognize how past events are studied and how they influence today's society and the human condition.

#### **Expected Learning Outcomes:**

1. Students construct an integrated perspective on history and the factors that shape human activity.
2. Students describe and analyze the origins and nature of contemporary issues.
3. Students speak and write critically about primary and secondary historical sources by examining diverse interpretations of past events and ideas in their historical contexts.

Students will learn fundamental elements of historical sociology to classify and organize information about the earliest territorially extensive ancient states and the peoples they governed. Readings include both primary sources in translation from a variety of ancient languages and non-textual material remains seen in photographs, all analyzed in class and in

secondary readings. Sources will be studied and discussed according to their genre and their transmission, survival, or recovery. Many of the events covered in this course contributed decisively to the demography of the present-day Near East and the social characteristics of its people, from the distribution of language communities to the variety of Near Eastern religions. Students will consider modern manifestations of and parallels to the ancient phenomena studied in this class and reflect on the means and motives for modern persons to identify themselves with ancient social groups. A pervasive question in this course is how we today know about the past and how we interpret it. Students will compose papers and participate in discussions to practice historically informed critical thinking, having studied ample primary materials, and employ methods for interpreting them.

## Required Course Books

1. Curtis, J., *Early Mesopotamia and Iran. Contact and conflict c. 3500-1600 B.C., Proceedings of a Seminar in Memory of Vladimir G. Lukonin*, British Museum Press, London, 1993. (in library)
2. Curtis J., *Later Mesopotamia and Iran, Tribes and Empires, 1600-539 BC, Proceeding of a Seminar in Memory of Vladimir G. Lukonin*, British Museum Press, London, 1997. (in library)
3. Curtis, J.E., and N. Tallis, *Forgotten Empire: The World of Ancient Persia*, University of California Press / British Museum Press 2005. (in library)
4. Herodotus, *The Histories*, trans. Robin Waterfield, Oxford 1998. (online)
5. Xenophon, *The Persian Expedition*, trans. Rex Warner, Penguin 1950. (online)
6. Dignas, Beate, and Engelbert Winter, *Rome and Persia in Late Antiquity: Neighbours and Rivals*, Cambridge University Press 2007. (in library)

## Readings available on the course Carmen/Canvas site

1. Grayson, A. Kirk, "Assyrian Rule of Conquered Territory in Ancient Western Asia," in Jack Sasson (ed.), *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, Scribner 1995, vol. 2, pp. 959–968.
2. "Conquering and Ruling Pre-Modern Afghanistan," excerpt of Chapter 2 of Thomas Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, Princeton University Press, 2010, pp. 66–90.
3. "An Incidental Annexation" and "Rome, Syria, Parthians and Persians," from Kevin Butcher, *Roman Syria and the Near East*, Getty Publications/British Museum Press 2003, pp. 19–60.

4. 2 *Maccabees* (excerpted from New Oxford Annotated Bible 2nd ed., revised, Oxford

University Press 1991, pp. 228–258).

5. Ammianus Marcellinus, *The Later Roman Empire: A.D. 354–378*, trans. Walter Hamilton, pp. 148–175.

6. Procopius, *The Wars*, Book 1, chapters xiii–iv (pp. 103–129, odd pages only), trans. H. B. Dewing, Loeb Classical Library 1915.

7. Patricia Crone, “The Early Islamic World,” in *War and Society in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds*, eds. Kurt Raaflaub and N. Lowenstein, Harvard University Press 1999, pp. 309–32.

8. *The History of Łazar P‘arpec ‘i*, trans. Robert Thomson, Scholars Press 1991, pp. 75–157.

9. *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite*, trans. by F. Trombley and J. Watt 2001.

## Online Resources

- Encyclopaedia Iranica online: <http://www.iranicaonline.org> [Containing articles on almost every subject we will touch on in the class. The website gives free access to the online version of the most important reference work on Iran ever compiled—paper version into the letter K as of this time.]
- <http://www.avesta.org> [archive of Old and Middle Iranian texts relevant to Zoroastrianism]
- <http://www.livius.org/persia.html> [a sort of mini-encyclopedia of ancient Iran]
- [http://www.mesopotamia.co.uk/gods/explore/exp\\_set.html](http://www.mesopotamia.co.uk/gods/explore/exp_set.html) [iconography of Mesopotamian divinities]

Collections databases:

- <http://www.ashmolean.org/ancient-near-east-0>
- <http://www.louvre.fr/en/moteur-de-recherche-oeuvres?tab=1 - tabs>
- <https://oi.uchicago.edu/collections/highlights-collections>
- <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search>
- <http://www.smb-digital.de/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&moduleFunction=h>

[highlight&filterName=filter.collection.highlights.2300](#) [Pergamon Museum collections from the Vorderasiatisches Museum]



# Course Opportunities and Grading

Final grades are assigned on the following point scale: A = 93 or higher, A- = 90–92, B+ = 87–89, B = 83–86, B- = 80–82, C+ = 77–79, C = 73–76, C- = 70–72, D+ = 67–69, D = 60–66, E = 0–59.

You will notice that one can, technically, earn more than 100 points. This is because most students will not earn all the possible points for any finished task, and students may choose to omit tasks with the exception of the final exam.

## Opportunities:

1. First essay paper (6–8 pages)	<b>20</b>
2. Second essay paper (4–6 pages)	<b>15</b>
3. Quizzes	<b>10</b>
4. Participation in discussion	<b>10</b>
5. Midterm exam	<b>15</b>
6. <u>Required</u> final exam (at scheduled time in lecture hall)	<b>30</b>
7. Report Museum (optional)	<b>10</b>
<b>Max. Points Possible</b>	<b>110</b>

**NOTE** Extensions to assignment deadlines are given only in the case of *documented medical emergency!*

## Academic Misconduct

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

## Class Attendance Policy

Students should attend all classes. Experience shows that students who attend and pay attention do well in this class. More than one absence may be grounds for reduction of your final grade by one-third of a letter (for example, B to B-). More than three absences will result in a grade of “E” for the course.

## **Disability Policy**

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: [slds@osu.edu](mailto:slds@osu.edu); 614-292-3307; [slds.osu.edu](http://slds.osu.edu); 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

## **General Instructions for Papers in this Course**

For a paper to count as turned in, you must submit BOTH a paper copy to me AND an electronic copy to the course Carmen site. If you do not do this, it will not be considered.

- Format all papers double-spaced with Times New Roman, 12-point font, 1" margins at top and bottom, 1.25" margins on sides. Make sure you proofread and spell-check.
- All papers must include references to any primary sources (including the texts we're reading for the course) and a bibliography of works consulted.

### **First Essay Topic: The Persian Empire in a Museum. Due Week 8**

Your course book *Forgotten Empire* is based on a major exhibition of ancient objects created and used in the Achaemenian Persian Empire. The exhibition was held in 2005 by the British Museum in collaboration with the National Museum of Iran and the Louvre. It includes photographs of the objects displayed along with detailed information about each object. As you study the catalogue of photographs, you are surveying many of the same materials that professional historians use today to reconstruct the history and culture of the Persian Empire. At the same time, the catalogue represents the selection of museum curators who wish to represent the Persian Empire as they imagine it for visitors to their museum. Write an essay, 6–8 pages in length, discussing any patterns you can see in the selection and type of materials presented. What sorts of objects are included, and what sorts are not included? What are the reasons behind these patterns? What do these objects tell us about the history of the Persian Empire, and what do they leave out?

### **Second Essay Topic: Empire through Artifacts. Due Week 10**

Artifacts provide a unique vista through which to view past societies and civilizations. At the beginning of this course, students were provided with a list of several dozen key

objects that have helped us understand how past empires project power through art. Students are asked to select an object from this list and examine the ways it has contributed to our understanding of the society that produced it. The essay should cover its discovery, publication and bibliography, including iconography and technique of production. In doing so, the essay will comprise a short history of the object from its discovery till today and an outline of its significant features. In addition to this, the essay should consider questions like: Why was this object produced? Where could have it been displayed? What does its preservation/provenance tell us about its importance? And what can we learn about its location today?

### **Museum Report. Due before final week of class (optional).**

Several museums within driving range of Columbus, Ohio, have substantial collections of objects from the ancient Near East. Most preeminent of them is the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago ([oi.uchicago.edu](http://oi.uchicago.edu)), perhaps the most important collection of such antiquities in North America (5.5 hr drive from OSU). There is also the Cleveland Museum of Art ([clevelandart.org](http://clevelandart.org)), which has exhibits of “Ancient Near Eastern, Greek, and Roman” art, “Early Christian and Byzantine” art, and “Ancient Egyptian” art (2.3 hr drive from OSU). The University of Michigan campus in Ann Arbor, Michigan, hosts the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology ([lsa.umich.edu/kelsey](http://lsa.umich.edu/kelsey)), 3.3 hr drive from OSU). The Cincinnati Art Museum web site ([cincinnatiartmuseum.org](http://cincinnatiartmuseum.org)) says that its Near East Gallery is under construction but they have an Antiquities gallery that may include some Near Eastern objects; this museum is a 1.45 hr drive from OSU.

You can choose to visit one of these museums or another equivalent pre-approved by the instructor in order to write a report about your visit. *Make sure to get a photo of yourself there.* Referring to *at least* three specific objects in the exhibit from three different periods or regions, discuss the value and limitations of the exhibit you visited in 2–3 pages. What, if anything, does seeing these objects in person teach you? Turn in your report on the Canvas site and send a copy electronically to both instructors along with the photo of yourself standing in front of one of these exhibits.

If you visit a museum for this assignment, inquire in advance about the hours of operation. Some museums will give discounts or even free admission to university students. Bring friends with you and have fun!

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

Schedule subject to change. All changes will be announced in class.

**Week 1: Introduction. The Geographical Setting. Tradition, recovery, and archaeology.**

- Reade, J. E., “The History of Assyria,” from *Art and Empire: Treasures from Assyria in the British Museum*, New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1995, pp. 17–31.
- Potts, D., *Mesopotamian Civilization: The material Foundations*, London, The Athlone Press, 1997.

**Online assignment this week: Explore the British Museum website “Mesopotamia”**

<http://www.mesopotamia.co.uk/menu.html>

Here you will find a lot of hyperlinked pages with information and images about ancient Mesopotamian cultures. Some of it is pretty basic, but you should get a sense of the materials available to historians to tell what life was like in this region in antiquity.

Make sure you click “Time” “Writing” “Assyria”

→ “Story” (follow story on early archaeology) → “Story” (follow development of cuneiform writing) → “Palaces” and “Warfare”

“Babylonia” → “Astronomers” and “Trade” Feel free to explore the rest of the site, take your time, and have fun!

**Week 2: Empire of Akkad and its successors in Mesopotamia.**

- Curtis, J., *Early Mesopotamia and Iran. Contact and conflict c. 3500-1600 B.C.*, Proceedings of a Seminar in Memory of Vladimir G. Lukonin, London, British Museum Press, 1993.
- Frankfort, H., *The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, collection “The Pelican History of Art”, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1996, pp. 83-92.
- Nylander C. “Earless in Nineveh: Who mutilated “Sargon’s” Head?”, *American Journal of Archaeology* 84, 1980, pp. 329-333 and pl. 43-45.
- Grayson, A. Kirk, “Assyrian Rule of Conquered Territory in Ancient Western Asia,” pp.959–968.

**Week 3: Mitanni and Hittite Empires.**

- Gurney O. R., *The Hittites*, London, 1990 (new edition).
- Macqueen J. G., *The Hittites and their Contemporaries in Asia Minor*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1985 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition).

**Week 4: Assyrian Empire**

- Curtis John (dir.), *Later Mesopotamia and Iran, Tribes and Empires, 1600-539 BC*, Proceedings of a Seminar in Memory of Vladimir G. Lukonin, British Museum Press, Londres,

1997.

- Reade J., *Assyrian Sculptures*, London, British Museum Press, 1983.
- Albenda P. *The Palace of Sargon*, King of Assyria, Paris, Edition Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1986.

**Online assignment this week: Explore the Assyrian palaces with virtual tours.**

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=btwAR5fID2c> [Nimrud palace]
- <http://archeologie.culture.fr/khorsabad/fr> [Khorsabad palace. Only in french but very good reconstruction of the Sargon Palace]

### **Week 5: The Babylonian and Median Empires. Cyrus.**

- Oates Joan, *Babylon*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1972.
- Potts, D., *The archaeology of Elam, Formation and Transformation of an Ancient Iranian State*, University Press, Cambridge, 1999.
- Read Herodotus, p. 3 and pp. 45–94 (sections [95] to [216]). [Here Herodotus gives the story of Cyrus and an account of Persian culture.]
- Read the “Nabonidus Cylinder” from Sippar at livius.org: <http://www.livius.org/na-nd/nabonidus/cylinder.html>
- Read the “Nabonidus Chronicle” at livius.org: [http://www.livius.org/ct-cz/cyrus\\_I/babylon02.html](http://www.livius.org/ct-cz/cyrus_I/babylon02.html)
- Read the “Cyrus Cylinder” at [livius.org](http://www.livius.org). (Make sure to click to page two at the bottom of the first page. You can see a clear photograph of the Cyrus cylinder in *Forgotten Empires*, p. 59.) [http://www.livius.org/ct-cz/cyrus\\_I/cyrus\\_cylinder.html](http://www.livius.org/ct-cz/cyrus_I/cyrus_cylinder.html)

### **Week 6: Darius and his coup d'état. The Royal Inscriptions. Introduction to Achaemenid art.**

- Read *Forgotten Empire*, pp. 12–24.
- Read Herodotus, excerpts from book 3 (pp. 169–186 and pp. 195–234). [Herodotus gives his accounts of Cambyses and Darius I.]
- Bordman John, *Persia and the West, an Archaeological Investigation of the Genesis of Achaemenid Art*, London, Thames and Hudson, 2000 [about influences of achaemenid arts : architecture, palaces, sculptures ]

**Online assignment this week: Read the Royal Inscriptions of the Achaemenids.** (This is in addition to the readings listed above!)

<http://www.livius.org/persia.html>

This website is a mini-encyclopedia on ancient Iran. You'll find it useful as a reference throughout the course. There are well-informed articles on important places, people, and different aspects of ancient Iran. Scroll to the bottom of the page to find the link "Royal inscriptions" (under the heading "Other"). Click the link to find a catalogue of the Achaemenid inscriptions.

1. Read DB (columns #1–#5) and DBa–k. Pay close attention; this is the most important document written for any Achaemenid king. Take a good look at the accompanying photographs of the reliefs.
2. Read DSf at the palace of Susa.
3. Read DNa and DNb on Darius' tomb at Naqš-i Rostam.
4. Also explore the links to the sites of Persepolis, Susa, and Naqš-i Rostam. Pay special attention to the photos of the inscriptions.
5. Now move on to the inscriptions of Xerxes I at Persepolis. Read XPa and XPh.
6. Finally, read some of the inscriptions of later Achaemenids. Take your time.

Questions to answer: Where were the inscriptions made? Locate them on a map. What messages do they offer? Why did the kings inscribe them? For whom were they written?

### **Week 7: Art, Royal Court and Administration of the Achaemenids.**

- Read and study *Forgotten Empire*, pp. 50–149 [this is 18 pages of text; the rest is images] and pp. 181–199.
- Read Herodotus, pp. 404–531. [This is Herodotus' famous account of Xerxes' invasion of Greece.]
- Workshop for first essay paper.
- Map Quiz 1: Modern Southwest Asia. Introducing Xenophon. Discussion of readings.
- *Paper 1 due on XX* The Persian Empire in a Museum.

**Online assignment this week: Discover archaeological sites, art and literature of the Achaemenids.**

<http://www.achemenet.com/en/>

**Week 8: Midterm. The Persians and the Greeks.**

- Read *Forgotten Empire*, pp. 236–249.
- Read Xenophon's *Persian Expedition*, pp. 55–211.
- Discussion of readings.

**Week 9: Establishing and Maintaining Frontiers Internal and External.**

- Read “Conquering and Ruling Pre-Modern Afghanistan,” from Thomas Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, pp. 66–89. This reading does not deal with the Persian Empire per se, but it consists of comparative and theoretical material essential for understanding the contents of this course.
- Read *Forgotten Empire*, pp. 210–235. (This is just 6 pages of text; the rest is images of objects with captions. Focus on understanding the organization of transport and warfare in the Persian Empire.)

**Week 10: The Aftermath of Alexander. The Seleucids, the Parthians, and Roman Annexation of Syria.**

***Paper 2 Due on XX Empire through artifacts.***

- Read “An Incidental Annexation” and “Rome, Syria, Parthians and Persians,” from Kevin Butcher, *Roman Syria and the Near East*, pp. 19–60.
- Read article at Encyclopaedia Iranica Online: “BAKTIĀRĪ TRIBE i. Ethnography”  
<http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/baktiari-tribe>, by J.-P. Digard.

**Week 11: Rome, the Parthians, and the Buffer States.**

- Read *2 Maccabees*.

**Online assignment this week: Browse Parthia.com.**

<http://www.parthia.com>

This is essentially a scholarly fan site for the ancient Parthian kingdom. It contains maps, essays, and extensive bibliography. Start by browsing the site to see what's there.

One of the main primary sources available from the Parthian kingdom is coins, together with a limited number of art objects and durable luxury goods. What can you learn by studying the online coin catalogue and other information on this website?



Write a concise summary of your findings (no more than a page) to discuss in your section meeting. What do these coins tell us about the Parthian dominion?

**Week 12: The Rise of the Sasanids of Persia until the defeat of Narse (third century CE).**

- Read Dignas and Winter, pp. 9–32, pp. 53–62, pp. 70–88, pp. 119–130.

**Online assignment this week: Study the Sasanian Rock Reliefs.**

(This is in addition to the readings listed above!)

<http://www.livius.org/persia.html>

This is the same website where you read the Achaemenid inscriptions. Now you are looking at inscriptions and rock carvings from hundreds of years later, portraying the Sasanian kings. Go to the bottom of the page and click on “Sasanian rock reliefs.” Focus on nos. 50, 53, 55, 57, 60, 63, 73, 74, 80, and 81–84. (No. 57 is the site of the inscription ŠKZ on the handout.)

Questions to answer: How do these reliefs portray the kings? What are the kings shown as doing? What symbols did the sculptors use, and why did they use them? Pay attention also to the locations where these reliefs were made. Did their locations have any special meaning? Find and identify the magian priest named Kartir (a.k.a. Kirdir), too.

When you’re done studying the reliefs, go back to the main page and click on “Sasanian crowns.” This will give you some close-ups of the elaborate headgear that these kings wore. Each one had a unique crown that can be used to identify him in coins and in other depictions. There are links to images of these coins so you can see for yourself.

**Week 13: The Rivalry between the Romans and the Sasanian Persians into the fifth century.**

- Read Handout: Shapur’s trilingual inscription (ŠKZ) at Naqš-i Rostam. 9
- Read Dignas and Winter, pp. 32–37, pp. 63–69, pp. 88–99, pp. 131–138, pp. 210–225.

**Week 14: The Empires at War. Armenia and Caucasus between the Empires.**

- Read Excerpt from Ammianus Marcellinus, pp. 148–175. • Read *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite*. • Procopius, *The Wars*, Book 1, chapters xiii–xiv, pp. 103–129 [odd pages only]. • Read Dignas and Winter, pp. 242–263.

- Read Dignas and Winter, pp. 173–195.

- Read *The History of Lazar P’arpec’i*, book 2 (trans. Robert Thomson 1991), pp. 75–157.

**Week 15: Persian Ascendancy. The Collapse of the Persian Empire and**

### **Muhammad's Movement.**

- Read Dignas and Winter, pp. 37–49, pp. 100–118, pp. 138–151, pp. 195–209, pp. 232–241, pp. 263–265.

The Historiography of the *Chronicle of Pseudo- Joshua the Stylite*.

### **Week 16: The Ascendancy of Islam. The Legacy of Ancient Iran and the Impact of Ancient Imperialism.**

- Read Dignas and Winter, pp. 152–172.
- Patricia Crone, “The Early Islamic World,” in *War and Society in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds*, Kurt Raaflaub and N. Lowenstein (eds.), Harvard University Press 1999, pp. 309–32.

**Final Exam: As scheduled by the University**

# Ancient Empires

## NELC 3111 Autumn 2016 (4 credit hours)

The History and Cultures of the Empires  
of Iran, Iraq, Syria, Armenia, and Afghanistan  
from Cyrus to Muhammad

Lectures MoWeFr 11:30–12:25 Location TBA  
and one weekly recitation section



cameo of Persian King of Kings Shapur I defeating the Roman Emperor Valerian on a sardonyx gemstone

**Professor Kevin van Bladel** (vanbladel.2@osu.edu)

**Office hours** Hagerty Hall 300G, MW 1–2 and by appt.

**GTAs:** **John Smith** (smith.882@osu.edu; Office hours TW 1–2, Location TBA)

**Jean Jones** (jones.432@osu.edu; Office hours F 2–4, Location TBA)

### GE Credit and Learning Goals

This course fulfills the **GE Historical Study** category. Expected learning outcomes:

1. Students construct an integrated perspective on history and the factors that shape human activity.
2. Students describe and analyze the origins and nature of contemporary issues.
3. Students speak and write critically about primary and secondary historical sources by examining diverse interpretations of past events and ideas in their historical contexts.

Students will learn fundamental elements of historical sociology to classify and organize information about the earliest territorially extensive ancient states and the peoples they governed. Readings include both primary sources in translation from a variety of ancient languages and non-textual material remains seen in photographs, all analyzed in class and in secondary readings. All sources will be studied and discussed according to their genre and their transmission, survival, or recovery. Many of the events covered in this course

contributed decisively to the demography of the present-day Near East and the social characteristics of its people, from the distribution of language communities to the variety of Near Eastern religions. Students will consider modern manifestations of and parallels to the ancient phenomena studied in this class and reflect on the means and motives for modern persons to identify themselves with ancient social groups. A pervasive question in this course is how we today know about the past and how we interpret it. Students will compose papers and participate in discussions to practice historically informed critical thinking, having studied ample primary materials, and employ methods for interpreting them.

## Course Description

This is an introduction to the history and cultures of the ancient empires of southwestern Asia, focusing on the period from the Assyrian and Persian Empires to the establishment of Islam (ca 900 BCE–ca 750 CE). Students will learn how to use ancient primary sources critically to create a historical narrative and to understand the modern appropriation of ancient history for political and other purposes.

Major topics include the formation of early states, the kingdoms of Mesopotamia, Anshan and the Elamites, the Achaemenid dynasty, Alexander and his successors, the Parthian and Sasanian Persian empires and their rivalries with Rome, as well as the empires of Afghanistan and the kingdom of Armenia. The course will include an introduction to the geography of southwestern Asia and a survey of languages, Iranian and other religions, and some ancient literature from a variety of cultures. Extensive readings of primary sources will include classical Greek and Latin authors, as well as works composed in Iran, from royal inscriptions to neighboring Armenian and Aramaic sources chronicling war and strife. Finally we will explain how the population of Iran and its neighbors became predominantly Muslim. Two major themes will be the nature of empires and the use and interpretation of primary written materials to reconstruct past cultures.

## Required Course Books (available at SBX, 1806 North High St.)

1. Curtis, J.E., and N. Tallis, *Forgotten Empire: The World of Ancient Persia*, University of California Press / British Museum Press 2005.
2. Herodotus, *The Histories*, trans. Robin Waterfield, Oxford 1998.
3. Xenophon, *The Persian Expedition*, trans. Rex Warner, Penguin 1950.
4. Dignas, Beate, and Engelbert Winter, *Rome and Persia in Late Antiquity: Neighbours and Rivals*, Cambridge University Press 2007.
5. Course Reader (available at SBX)
  - (a) Grayson, A. Kirk, "Assyrian Rule of Conquered Territory in Ancient Western Asia," in Jack Sasson (ed.), *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, Scribner 1995, vol. 2, pp. 959–968.
  - (b) "Conquering and Ruling Pre-Modern Afghanistan," excerpt of Chapter 2 of Thomas Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, Princeton University Press, 2010, pp. 66–90.
  - (c) "An Incidental Annexation" and "Rome, Syria, Parthians and Persians," from Kevin Butcher, *Roman Syria and the Near East*, Getty Publications/British Museum Press 2003, pp. 19–60.
  - (d) *2 Maccabees* (excerpted from New Oxford Annotated Bible 2nd ed., revised, Oxford University Press 1991, pp. 228–258).
  - (e) Ammianus Marcellinus, *The Later Roman Empire: A.D. 354–378*, trans. Walter Hamilton, pp. 148–175.

- (f) Procopius, *The Wars*, Book 1, chapters xiii–iv (pp. 103–129, odd pages only), trans. H. B. Dewing, Loeb Classical Library 1915.
- (g) Khalid Yahya Blankinship, “Jihad and the Caliphate before Hishām,” in *The End of the Jihād State: Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Malik and the Collapse of the Umayyads*, pp. 11–35.

### Readings available on the course Carmen site under Content

1. *The History of Lazar P‘arpec‘i*, trans. Robert Thomson, Scholars Press 1991, pp. 75–157.
2. *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite*, trans. by F. Trombley and J. Watt 2001. (Available on the course Carmen site and, together with the introduction and maps, as a free download through OSU’s library catalogue online: click “additional web content” at the online library record for this book, then enter your username and password, and you will reach the publisher’s page for the book where the whole volume can be downloaded as a pdf file.)

### Online Resources

- Encyclopaedia Iranica online: [www.iranicaonline.org](http://www.iranicaonline.org) [Containing articles on almost every subject we will touch on in the class. The website gives free access to the online version of the most important reference work on Iran ever compiled—paper version into the letter K as of this time.]
- [www.avesta.org](http://www.avesta.org) [archive of Old and Middle Iranian texts relevant to Zoroastrianism]
- [www.livius.org/persia.html](http://www.livius.org/persia.html) [a sort of mini-encyclopaedia of ancient Iran]

## Course Opportunities and Grading

The only absolute requirement for this course is that you take the final exam, *although that is not in itself sufficient to pass the course* because alone it confers at most 20 points. All other tasks are optional. You may choose to do any combination of them, doing all or only some of the tasks, to earn the grade you want. Final grades are assigned on the following point scale:

A = 93 or higher, A- = 90–92, B+ = 87–89, B = 83–86, B- = 80–82, C+ = 77–79, C = 73–76, C- = 70–72, D+ = 67–69, D = 63–60, E = 0–59

The opportunities to earn points contributing toward your point total are listed below. Select the tasks you wish to perform for credit from the list below as items from a menu. I recommend writing the two main papers, taking the midterm exam and the final exam, and participating in discussion section every week (items 1–6). You will notice that one can, technically, earn more than 100 points. This is because most students will not earn all the possible points for any finished task, and students may choose to omit tasks with the exception of the final exam.

<b>Opportunity</b>	<b>Max. Points Possible</b>
1. first essay paper (6–8 pages) (due Week 6)	20
2. second essay paper (6–8 pages) (due Week 14)	20
3. quizzes in recitation section	12
4. recitation section participation in discussion	10
5. midterm exam (at lecture time on October 19)	20
6. <b>required</b> final exam (at scheduled time in lecture hall)	20
7. Old Persian Reading Exercises, optional (weeks 2–8)	5

**NOTE** Extensions to assignment deadlines are given only in the case of *documented medical emergency!*

### Academic Misconduct

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed ; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (<http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>).

### Turnitin.com

To participate in this course, you will be required to submit your written work through our course Carmen website to Turnitin.com, a service employed by OSU to ensure the originality of students’ writing and to protect your writing from plagiarism by others. Instructions for submitting your paper to this service will be given in class. If you feel uncomfortable about this or are unwilling to follow this policy, you should seek another course.

### Class Attendance Policy

Students should attend all lectures and recitation sections. Experience shows that students who attend and pay attention to both do well in this class. Participation in recitation sections is an opportunity to earn points in this course.

Please discuss excused absences from discussion section with your TA as early as possible. More than one absence may be grounds for reduction of your final grade by one-third of a

letter (for example, B to B-). More than three absences will result in a grade of “EN” for the course.

### **Disability policy**

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

## General Instructions for Papers in this Course

You may write two essay papers for this course.

First Essay due September XXth (Week 6)

Second Essay due November XXth (Week 14)

- For a paper to count as turned in, you must submit BOTH a paper copy to me AND an electronic copy to the course Carmen site. If you do not do this, it will not be considered.
- Format all papers double-spaced with Times New Roman, 12-point font, 1" margins at top and bottom, 1.25" margins on sides. Make sure you proofread and spell-check. Spelling and grammar are considered in the evaluation.
- All papers must include references to any primary sources (including the texts we're reading for the course) and a bibliography of works consulted. Cite everything scrupulously.

### First Essay Topic: The Persian Empire in a Museum.

#### Due Week 6.

Your course book *Forgotten Empire* is based on a major exhibition of ancient objects created and used in the Achaemenian Persian Empire. The exhibition was held in 2005 by the British Museum in collaboration with the National Museum of Iran and the Louvre. It includes photographs of the objects displayed along with detailed information about each object. As you study the catalogue of photographs, you are surveying many of the same materials that professional historians use today to reconstruct the history and culture of the Persian Empire. At the same time, the catalogue represents the selection of museum curators who wish to represent the Persian Empire as they imagine it for visitors to their museum.

Write an essay, 6–8 pages in length, discussing any patterns you can see in the selection and type of materials presented. What sorts of objects are included, and what sorts are not included? What are the reasons behind these patterns? What do these objects tell us about the history of the Persian Empire, and what do they leave out?

### Second Essay Topic: The Historiography of the Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite.

#### Due Week 14.

*The Chronicle of Joshua the Stylite*, written in the Syriac dialect of Aramaic in the early sixth century CE, describes life in Mesopotamia and Syria during the wars between the Sasanian Persian and Roman Empires. Basing your analysis on a close reading of the text, discuss in 6–8 pages the author's purpose in writing this chronicle and describe his method as a historian. How does he interpret the events he describes in order to construct a narrative? How does he make sense of his own society's history? Explain your answers with specific examples from the text.



## COURSE SCHEDULE

Schedule subject to change. All changes will be announced in class.

**Week 1 (Aug 27, 29): Introduction. The Geographical Setting. Tradition, recovery, and archaeology.**

- Reade, J. E., “The History of Assyria,” from *Art and Empire: Treasures from Assyria in the British Museum*, New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1995, pp. 17–31.

**Online assignment this week:**

**Explore the British Museum website “Mesopotamia”**

[www.mesopotamia.co.uk/menu.html](http://www.mesopotamia.co.uk/menu.html)

Here you will find a lot of hyperlinked pages with information and images about ancient Mesopotamian cultures. Some of it is pretty basic, but you should get a sense of the materials available to historians to tell what life was like in this region in antiquity.

Make sure you click “Time” → “Story” (follow story on early archaeology)

“Writing” → “Story” (follow development of cuneiform writing)

“Assyria” → “Palaces” and “Warfare”

“Babylonia” → “Astronomers” and “Trade”

Feel free to explore the rest of the site, take your time, and have fun!

Discussion section: Introductions. Course expectations. Introducing Herodotus. Using the book *Forgotten Empire*.

**Week 2 (No Lecture Sept 1 [Labor Day]; Sept 3 & 5): Assyrian and Median Empires. Cyrus.**

- Grayson, A. Kirk, “Assyrian Rule of Conquered Territory in Ancient Western Asia,” pp. 959–968 (course reader).
- Read Herodotus, p. 3 and pp. 45–94 (sections [95] to [216]). [Here Herodotus gives the story of Cyrus and an account of Persian culture.]
- Read the “Nabonidus Cylinder” from Sippar at livius.org:  
<http://www.livius.org/na-nd/nabonidus/cylinder.html>
- Read the “Nabonidus Chronicle” at livius.org:  
[http://www.livius.org/ct-cz/cyrus\\_I/babylon02.html](http://www.livius.org/ct-cz/cyrus_I/babylon02.html)
- Read the “Cyrus Cylinder” at livius.org. (Make sure to click to page two at the bottom of the first page. You can see a clear photograph of the Cyrus cylinder in *Forgotten Empires*, p. 59.)  
[http://www.livius.org/ct-cz/cyrus\\_I/cyrus\\_cylinder.html](http://www.livius.org/ct-cz/cyrus_I/cyrus_cylinder.html)

Discussion Section: Discussion of Herodotus. Receive instructions for the two map quizzes. Expectations for the two term papers.

**Week 3 (Sept 8, 10 & 12): Darius and his coup d'état. The Royal Inscriptions.**

- Read *Forgotten Empire*, pp. 12–24.
- Read Herodotus, excerpts from book 3 (pp. 169–186 and pp. 195–234). [Herodotus gives his accounts of Cambyses and Darius I.]

**Online assignment this week: Read the Royal Inscriptions of the Achaemenids.**  
(This is in addition to the readings listed above!)

[www.livius.org/persia.html](http://www.livius.org/persia.html)

This website is a mini-encyclopaedia on ancient Iran. You'll find it useful as a reference throughout the course. There are well-informed articles on important places, people, and different aspects of ancient Iran. Scroll to the bottom of the page to find the link "Royal inscriptions" (under the heading "Other"). Click the link to find a catalogue of the Achaemenid inscriptions.

1. Read DB (columns #1–#5) and DBa–k. Pay close attention; this is the most important document written for any Achaemenid king. Take a good look at the accompanying photographs of the reliefs.
2. Read DSf at the palace of Susa.
3. Read DNa and DNb on Darius' tomb at Naqš-i Rostam.
4. Also explore the links to the sites of Persepolis, Susa, and Naqš-i Rostam. Pay special attention to the photos of the inscriptions.
5. Now move on to the inscriptions of Xerxes I at Persepolis. Read XPa and XPh.
6. Finally, read some of the inscriptions of later Achaemenids. Take your time.

Questions to answer: Where were the inscriptions made? Locate them on a map. What messages do they offer? Why did the kings inscribe them? For whom were they written?

Discussion Section: Map Quiz 1: Modern Southwest Asia. Discussion of readings including the online assignment.

**Week 4 (Sept 15, 17 & 19): The Royal Court and Administration of the Achaemenids.**

- Read and study *Forgotten Empire*, pp. 50–149 [this is 18 pages of text; the rest is images] and pp. 181–199.
- Read Herodotus, pp. 404–531. [This is Herodotus' famous account of Xerxes' invasion of Greece.]

Discussion Section: Map Quiz 2: Ancient Southwest Asia. Introducing Xenophon. Discussion of readings.

**Week 5 (Sept 22, 24 & 26): The Persians and the Greeks.**

- Read *Forgotten Empire*, pp. 236–249.
- Read Xenophon's *Persian Expedition*, pp. 55–211.

Discussion Section: Discussion of readings. Workshop for first essay paper.

**Week 6 (Sept 29, Oct 1 & 3): Establishing and Maintaining Frontiers Internal and External.**

- *Paper 1 due on Monday, September 29th!* The Persian Empire in a Museum.
- Wednesday, October 1st: in-class video excerpts of the documentary “Grass” with commentary
- Read “Conquering and Ruling Pre-Modern Afghanistan,” from Thomas Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, pp. 66–89. This reading does not deal with the Persian Empire per se, but it consists of comparative and theoretical material essential for understanding the contents of this course.
- Read *Forgotten Empire*, pp. 210–235. (This is just 6  $\frac{1}{2}$  pages of text; the rest is images of objects with captions. Focus on understanding the organization of transport and warfare in the Persian Empire.)

Discussion Section: Greek views of the Persian Empire. Discussion of readings.

**Week 7 (Oct 6, 8 & 10): The Aftermath of Alexander. The Seleucids, the Parthians, and Roman Annexation of Syria.**

- Read “An Incidental Annexation” and “Rome, Syria, Parthians and Persians,” from Kevin Butcher, *Roman Syria and the Near East*, pp. 19–60 (course reader).
- Read article at Encyclopaedia Iranica Online: “BAKTIĀRĪ TRIBE i. Ethnography” <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/baktiari-tribe>, by J.-P. Digard. This is a follow-up to the documentary “Grass” that we watched Oct 1st. You need to read the first part down to the first bibliography and no further; this is the equivalent of about eight pages in a Word document. When you read this article, you should pay particular attention to the interaction of the pastoralist Bakhtiari people and the governments of sedentary Iran. You will be discussing this reading in your section meetings.

Discussion Section: Discussion of readings. “Alexander the Great”?

**Week 8 (Oct 13, 15 & 17): Midterm. Rome, the Parthians, and the Buffer States.**

*MIDTERM EXAMINATION: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17*

- Read *2 Maccabees* (course reader).

**Online assignment this week: Browse Parthia.com.**

[www.parthia.com](http://www.parthia.com)

This is essentially a scholarly fan site for the ancient Parthian kingdom. It contains maps, essays, and extensive bibliography. Start by browsing the site to see what's there.

One of the main primary sources available from the Parthian kingdom is coins, together with a limited number of art objects and durable luxury goods. What can you learn by studying the online coin catalogue and other information on this website?

Write a concise summary of your findings (no more than a page) to discuss in your section meeting. What do these coins tell us about the Parthian dominion?

Discussion Section: Review for midterm exam. Telling history from everyday objects and coins.

**Week 9 (Oct 20, 22 & 24): The Rise of the Sasanids of Persia until the defeat of Narse (third century CE).**

- Read Dignas and Winter, pp. 9–32, pp. 53–62, pp. 70–88, pp. 119–130.

**Online assignment this week: Study the Sasanian Rock Reliefs.**

(This is in addition to the readings listed above!)

[www.livius.org/persia.html](http://www.livius.org/persia.html)

This is the same website where you read the Achaemenid inscriptions. Now you are looking at inscriptions and rock carvings from hundreds of years later, portraying the Sasanian kings. Go to the bottom of the page and click on “Sasanian rock reliefs.” Focus on nos. 50, 53, 55, 57, 60, 63, 73, 74, 80, and 81–84. (No. 57 is the site of the inscription ŠKZ on the handout.)

Questions to answer: How do these reliefs portray the kings? What are the kings shown as doing? What symbols did the sculptors use, and why did they use them? Pay attention also to the locations where these reliefs were made. Did their locations have any special meaning? Find and identify the magian priest named Kartir (a.k.a. Kirdir), too.

When you're done studying the reliefs, go back to the main page and click on “Sasanian crowns.” This will give you some close-ups of the elaborate headgear that these kings wore. Each one had a unique crown that can be used to identify him in coins and in other depictions. There are links to images of these coins so you can see for yourself.

Discussion Section: Discussion of readings. Were the Sasanians the heirs of the Achaemenids?

**Week 10 (Oct 27, 29 & 31): The Rivalry between the Romans and the Sasanian Persians into the fifth century.**

- Read Handout: Shapur's trilingual inscription (ŠKZ) at Naqš-i Rostam.
- Read Dignas and Winter, pp. 32–37, pp. 63–69, pp. 88–99, pp. 131–138, pp. 210–225.

Discussion Section: Study of ŠKZ. Introducing “Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite.” Discussion of Readings.

**Week 11 (Nov 3, 5 & 7): The Empires at War.**

- Read Excerpt from Ammianus Marcellinus, pp. 148–175 (course reader).
- Read *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite* (online through Blackboard site under Content or as a free download through Homer).
- Procopius, *The Wars*, Book 1, chapters xiii–iv, pp. 103–129 [odd pages only] (course reader).
- Read Dignas and Winter, pp. 242–263.

Discussion Section: Discussion of readings.

**Week 12 (Nov 10, 12 & 14): Armenia and the Caucasus between the Empires.**

- Read Dignas and Winter, pp. 173–195.
- Read *The History of Lazar P'arpec'i*, book 2 (trans. Robert Thomson 1991), pp. 75–157 (course reserve).

Discussion Section: Discussion of readings.

**Week 13 (Nov 17, 19, & 21): Persian Ascendancy.**

- Read Dignas and Winter, pp. 37–49, pp. 100–118, pp. 138–151, pp. 195–209, pp. 232–241, pp. 263–265.

Discussion Section: Workshop for second essay paper.

**Week 14 (Nov 24; lectures on Nov 26 & 28 cancelled due to holidays): The Collapse of the Persian Empire and Muhammad's Movement.**

- *Paper 2 due Monday, November 24!* The Historiography of the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite*.

Discussion Section: Discussion of readings.

**Week 15–16 (Dec 1, 3, 5, & 8): The Ascendancy of Islam. The Legacy of Ancient Iran and the Impact of Ancient Imperialism.**

- Read Dignas and Winter, pp. 152–172.
- Read Khalid Yahya Blankinship, “Jihad and the Caliphate before Hishām,” in *The End of the Jihād State: Hishām ibn 'Abd al-Malik and the Collapse of the Umayyads*, pp. 11–35 (course reader).

Discussion Section: Review for final exam.

**Final Exam: As scheduled by the University (in the lecture hall)**

## **GE Rationale for proposed NELC 3111 Ancient Empires**

This course fulfills the GE Historical Study category. Expected learning outcomes:

1. Students construct an integrated perspective on history and the factors that shape human activity.
2. Students describe and analyze the origins and nature of contemporary issues.
3. Students speak and write critically about primary and secondary historical sources by examining diverse interpretations of past events and ideas in their historical contexts.

### **Rationale:**

Students will learn fundamental elements of historical sociology to classify and organize information about the earliest territorially extensive ancient states and the peoples they governed. Readings include both primary sources in translation from a variety of ancient languages and non-textual material remains seen in photographs, all analyzed in class and in secondary readings. All sources will be studied and discussed according to their genre and their transmission, survival, or recovery.

Many of the events covered in this course contributed decisively to the demography of the present-day Near East and the social characteristics of its people, from the distribution of language communities to the variety of Near Eastern religions. Students will consider modern manifestations of and parallels to the ancient phenomena studied in this class and reflect on the means and motives for modern persons to identify themselves with ancient social groups.

A pervasive question in this course is how we today know about the past and how we interpret it. Students will compose papers and participate in discussions to practice historically informed critical thinking, having studied ample primary materials, and employ methods for interpreting them.

## Assessing Outcomes in NELC 3111 Ancient Empires

### Direct Measure:

This course fulfills the GE category “Historical Study.” We have adopted the best practices from the History Department at OSU in matching the Expected Learning Outcomes to the following rubrics (below). These rubrics are to be used in assessing course outcomes.

### Direct Measure Assessment Goal:

Students should improve throughout the semester, reaching the “capstone” level by the end of the course. Our goal is that at least 75% of students are demonstrating the “capstone” level of understanding for all three ELOs by the end of the course.

ELO1 is met through a combination of student tasks that can be evaluated. Students are expected to understand the basics of the chronology and geography of the ancient Near East and to demonstrate this on quizzes, the midterm, and the final exam. Students demonstrate their integrated understanding of the past through their essays (term papers), both of which asks students to study the value and limitations as sources of information on the past through an array of objects presented in course books and other selected resources.

ELO2 is addressed explicitly through lectures and readings. The students’ first essay deals specifically with this ELO, asking students to analyze objects as arranged by contemporary scholars whose activities are embedded in specific national projects. The students consider both modern (contemporary) presentation of ancient materials as they analyze the materials themselves. (This also furthers the goals of integration articulated in ELO1.)

ELO3 is met through two essays which are evaluated not only for their ideas but also for the clarity of presentation of their interpretation of the past through sources understood as a part of a historical context and on the basis of present materials.

### Historical Study

#### Goals:

Students recognize how past events are studied and how they influence today’s society and the human condition.

### Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Students construct an integrated perspective on history and the factors that shape human activity.
2. Students describe and analyze the origins and nature of contemporary issues.
3. Students speak and write critically about primary and secondary historical sources by examining diverse interpretations of past events and ideas in their historical contexts.

	Capstone (4)	Milestone (3)	Milestone (2)	Benchmark (1)
<b>(ELO1) Students construct an integrated perspective on history and the factors that shape human activity.</b>	Demonstrates sophisticated understanding of the complexity of historical events and trends and of explanations of historical change.	Demonstrates adequate understanding of the complexity of historical events and trends and of explanations of historical change.	Demonstrates partial understanding of the complexity of historical events and trends and of explanations of historical change.	Demonstrates surface understanding of the complexity of historical events and trends and of explanations of historical change.

<b>(ELO2) Students describe and analyze the origins and nature of contemporary issues.</b>	Organizes and synthesizes evidence to bring into focus important patterns, differences, or similarities.	Organizes evidence to bring into focus important patterns, differences, or similarities.	Organizes evidence but not in a way that effectively brings into focus important patterns, differences, or similarities.	Presents evidence, but without organization that brings into focus important patterns, differences, or similarities.
<b>ELO3) Students speak and write critically about primary and secondary historical sources by examining diverse interpretations of past events and ideas in their historical contexts.</b>	Uses evidence to develop an original analysis or synthesis. Skillfully reconciles or refutes differing interpretations and/or conflicting evidence.	Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Makes a significant attempt to reconcile or refute differing interpretations and/or conflicting evidence.	Information is taken from source(s) with some attempt to interpret/evaluate but not enough to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Some attempt to reconcile or refute differing interpretations and/or conflicting evidence.	Information is taken from source(s) without interpretation/evaluation. No significant attempt to reconcile or refute differing interpretations and/or conflicting evidence.

**Indirect Measures:**

Students will be directed to complete this evaluation at the end of the semester.

**Indirect Measure Assessment Goal:**

We expect 85% or more “agree” or “strongly agree” from students at the end of the semester.

**Directions:** In order to assess the effectiveness of this General Education course, we are asking for students’ input on learning objectives. Please place an X in grid below to indicate how strongly you agree that this course provided you with opportunities to meet the learning objectives. You may type in comments in the space provided. All responses are anonymous.

**Historical Study ELO 1**

Students construct an integrated perspective on history and the factors that shape human activity.

This course provided opportunities for me to meet this objective.

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Disagree strongly

**Please explain:**



**Historical Study ELO 2**

Students describe and analyze the origins and nature of contemporary issues.

This course provided opportunities for me to meet this objective.

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Disagree Strongly

**Please explain:**

**Historical Study ELO 3**

Students speak and write critically about primary and secondary historical sources by examining diverse interpretations of past events and ideas in their historical contexts.

This course provided opportunities for me to meet this objective.

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Disagree Strongly

**Please explain:**



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

---

College of Arts and Sciences

Department of Classics  
414 University Hall  
230 N. Oval Mall  
Columbus, OH 43210

614-292-2744 Phone  
614-292-7835 Fax

[classics.osu.edu](http://classics.osu.edu)

August 7, 2013

Professor K. Van Bladel

Chair, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures

Dear Professor van Bladel,

It is my pleasure to write a letter of concurrence for your course *Ancient Empires*, which looks like a splendid addition to our offerings in the Ancient World, and fulfills a real need. I also like that it brings together our three departments, and think it has great enrollment potential at OSU. The multi-cultural dimension of the course is particularly welcome.

My best,

Benjamin Acosta-Hughes

Professor and Chair

**Subject:** RE: seeking History Department concurrence for proposed NELC course  
**Date:** Saturday, January 24, 2015 at 2:42:09 PM Eastern Standard Time  
**From:** Baker, Paula  
**To:** Acome, Justin

Dear Justin,  
The History department's UTC discussed your proposal, and we are happy to offer History's concurrence for Historical Studies GE designation. Our only suggestions concern the title, which seems to imply a broader or comparative course. Suggestions for new titles included "Ancient Empires in the Cradle of Civilization" or one that simply also included the region covered.

Paula Baker  
Associate Professor and Director of Undergraduate Studies  
Department of History

---

**From:** Acome, Justin  
**Sent:** Friday, January 16, 2015 12:33 PM  
**To:** Baker, Paula  
**Subject:** Re: seeking History Department concurrence for proposed NELC course

Hello Paula,  
I'm not sure what happened there; with luck, these will come through.  
Justin

-----  
Justin Acome  
Academic Program Coordinator

Department of Near Eastern Languages & Cultures  
Ohio State University  
300 Hagerty Hall, 1775 College Rd  
Columbus, OH 43210  
nelc.osu.edu  
(614) 292-4479

---

**From:** <Baker>, Paula <[baker.973@osu.edu](mailto:baker.973@osu.edu)>  
**Date:** Friday, January 16, 2015 at 12:22 PM  
**To:** "Acome, Justin" <[acome.1@osu.edu](mailto:acome.1@osu.edu)>  
**Subject:** RE: seeking History Department concurrence for proposed NELC course

Justin,  
An image file came through but nothing else.  
Paula

---

**From:** Acome, Justin  
**Sent:** Friday, January 16, 2015 11:43 AM  
**To:** Baker, Paula  
**Subject:** Re: seeking History Department concurrence for proposed NELC course

Dear Paula,  
Thank you for writing so quickly.  
I'm attaching here the syllabus in question (as well as the other proposal documents, just in case they're useful to you.) Please let me know if you would like us to provide anything else.

Justin

-----  
Justin Acome  
Academic Program Coordinator

Department of Near Eastern Languages & Cultures  
Ohio State University  
300 Hagerty Hall, 1775 College Rd  
Columbus, OH 43210  
nelc.osu.edu  
(614) 292-4479

---

**From:** <Baker>, Paula <[baker.973@osu.edu](mailto:baker.973@osu.edu)>  
**Date:** Friday, January 16, 2015 at 11:36 AM  
**To:** "Acome, Justin" <[acome.1@osu.edu](mailto:acome.1@osu.edu)>  
**Subject:** RE: seeking History Department concurrence for proposed NELC course

Dear Justin,  
You should send me a copy to the syllabus. I will review it with our undergraduate teaching committee, and then reply. Generally, an email concurrence is fine.  
Paula

---

**From:** Ward, Kristina  
**Sent:** Friday, January 16, 2015 11:27 AM  
**To:** Acome, Justin  
**Cc:** Baker, Paula  
**Subject:** RE: seeking History Department concurrence for proposed NELC course

Dear Justin,

I have copied Professor Paula Baker, chair of the Undergraduate Teaching Committee. She handles concurrences for the department and will let you know how best to proceed.

Thanks,  
Kristina



**Kristina Ward**  
Administrative Associate  
Department of History  
106 Dulles Hall | 230 W. 17th Avenue | Columbus, OH 43210  
614-292-3001 Office | 614-292-2282 Fax  
[ward.768@osu.edu](mailto:ward.768@osu.edu) [history.osu.edu/](http://history.osu.edu/)

---

**From:** Acome, Justin  
**Sent:** Friday, January 16, 2015 10:53 AM  
**To:** Ward, Kristina  
**Subject:** seeking History Department concurrence for proposed NELC course

Dear Kristina,  
I hope you're not completely the wrong person to be fielding a question like this - I'm making a guess based on your Department's website - but we are in the process of proposing a new undergraduate class and need

to request formal concurrence from your department.

Is there a procedure that History prefers for such things? If so, what do you need me to do? Or if not, what do you suggest I do? I can provide the syllabus and accompanying materials, as well as the Concurrence form pre-filled with our materials. Please let me know what you think is best.

Thank you in advance,

Justin

-----

Justin Acome  
Academic Program Coordinator

Department of Near Eastern Languages & Cultures  
Ohio State University  
300 Hagerty Hall, 1775 College Rd  
Columbus, OH 43210  
nelc.osu.edu  
(614) 292-4479